



# SUMMER READING LIST\*

## Build a Better World ~ Grades 5-6

Suggested summer reading compiled for the Connecticut Department of Education by Linda Williams, Connecticut State Library

### FICTION

#### **Because of Mr. Terupt** by Rob Buyea

Seven fifth-graders at Snow Hill School in Connecticut relate how their lives are changed for the better by "rookie teacher" Mr. Terupt. | [Nutmeg](#) | Lexile: 560

#### **This Journal Belongs to Ratchet** by Nancy J. Cavanaugh

Homeschooled by her mechanic-environmentalist father, eleven-year-old Rachel "Ratchet" Vance records her efforts to make friends, save a park, remember her mother, and find her own definition of "normal." | [NCTE](#) | Lexile: 830

#### **Gaby, Lost and Found** by Angela Cervantes

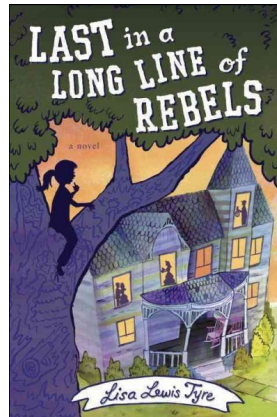
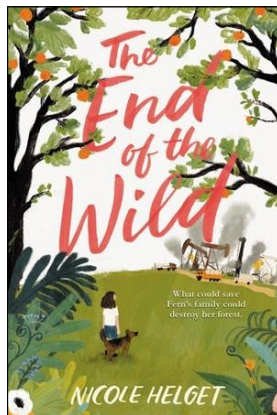
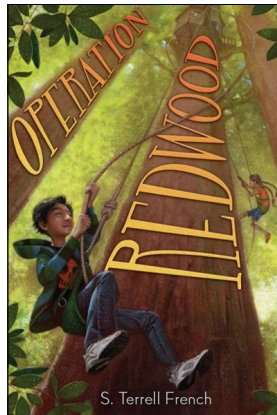
Gaby Howard loves volunteering at the local animal shelter. Her mother has been deported to Honduras and Gaby is stuck living with her inattentive dad. She's confident that her mom will come home soon so that they can adopt Gaby's favorite shelter cat together. But Gaby worries that her plans for the perfect family are about to fall apart. | [NCTE](#), [Nutmeg](#) | Lexile: 640

#### **Seedfolks** by Paul Fleischman

One by one, a number of people of varying ages and backgrounds transform a trash-filled inner-city lot into a productive and beautiful garden, and, in doing so, the gardeners are themselves transformed. | [ALA](#), [ILA](#), [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 710

#### **Operation Redwood** by S. Terrell French

In northern California, Julian Carter-Li and his friends old and new fight to save a grove of redwoods from an investment company that plans to cut them down. | [ILA](#) | Lexile: 700



#### **The End of the Wild** by Nicole Helget

Eleven-year-old Fern helps to take care of her impoverished family by foraging for food in the forest, but when a fracking company rolls into town, she realizes that her peaceful woods and her family's livelihood could be threatened.

#### **Hoot** by Carl Hiaasen

Roy, who is new to his small Florida community, becomes involved in another boy's attempt to save a colony of burrowing owls from a proposed construction site. | [ALA](#), [Nutmeg](#) | Lexile: 760

#### **One White Dolphin** by Gill Lewis

When a baby albino dolphin caught in old fishing netting washes ashore, Paralympics sailing hopeful Felix and English school girl Kara work with veterinarians and specialists to save and reunite the dolphin with her mother, setting off a chain of events that might just save the reef from the environmental effects of proposed dredging. | [NSTA](#) | Lexile: 620

#### **Bayou Magic** by Jewell Parker Rhodes

Visiting her grandmother in the Louisiana bayou, ten-year-old Maddy begins to realize that she may be the only sibling to carry on the gift of her family's magical legacy. | Lexile: 410

#### **Last in a Long Line of Rebels** by Lisa Lewis Tyre

When the city of Zollicoffer, Tennessee, where her family lives, announces plans to seize their one hundred seventy-five year old house through eminent domain, twelve-year-old Louise Mayhew needs to come up with a way to save it--and her ancestor's Civil War diary linking the house to the Underground Railroad, as well as a hidden treasure, seem to offer her family the best chance of saving their home. | [ILA](#), [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 660

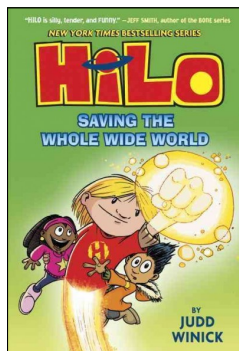


# SUMMER READING LIST\*

## GRAPHIC NOVELS

### **Saving the Whole Wide World** by Judd Winick

Hilo and his friends must save the world from monsters from another dimension. | [Book 1 was a Nutmeg](#) | Lexile: 260



## NONFICTION

**Fire in Their Eyes:** Wildfires and the People Who Fight Them by *Karen Magnuson Beil*  
Depicts in text and photographs the training, equipment, and real-life experiences of people who risk their lives to battle wildfires, as well as people who use fire for ecological reasons. | [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 1010

**We Will Not Be Silent:** The White Rose Student Resistance Movement that Defied Adolf Hitler by *Russell Freedman*  
The true story of the White Rose, a group of students in Nazi Germany who were active undercover agents of the resistance movement against Hitler and his regime. | [ALA](#) | Lexile: 630

**The First Step:** How One Girl Put Segregation on Trial by *Susan Goodman*  
Shares the story of Sarah Roberts and her 1847 case petitioning that she be allowed to attend a white school, explaining how her heroic efforts established key precedents and paved the way for civil rights advancements. | [NCTE](#), [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 770

**Chasing Cheetahs:** The Race to Save Africa's Fastest Cats by *Sy Montgomery*  
Describes the cheetah's essential role in the ecosystem and the ways in which Namibia's Cheetah Conservation Fund is promoting cohabitation between cheetahs and farmers. | [ALA](#), [NSTA](#) | Lexile: 1000

**Heroes of the Environment:** True Stories of People Who Are Helping to Protect the Planet by *Harriet Rohmer*  
Highlights the accomplishments of twelve people from across North America who have worked to protect the environment, including a Mexican superstar wrestler who protects turtles and whales. | Lexile 1070

**Separate is Never Equal:** Sylvia Mendez & Her Family's Flight for Desegregation by *Duncan Tonatiuh*

Years before the landmark U.S. Supreme Court ruling *Brown v. Board of Education*, Sylvia Mendez, an eight-year-old girl of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage, played an instrumental role in *Mendez v. Westminster*, the landmark desegregation case of 1946 in California. | [ALA](#) | Lexile: 870

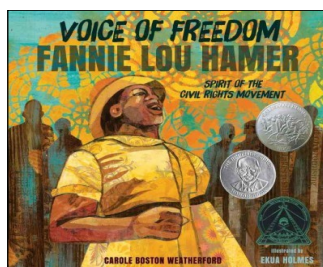
## BIOGRAPHY

**Fannie Never Flinched:** One Woman's Courage in the Struggle for American Labor Union Rights by *Mary Cronk Farrell*  
Traces the life of Fannie Sellins, a union activist who traveled the nation promoting fair wages and decent working and living conditions for workers in the garment and mining industries. | [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 1020

**Temple Grandin:** How the Girl Who Loved Cows Embraced Autism and Changed the World by *Sy Montgomery*  
Examines the life and accomplishments of Temple Grandin, whose childhood diagnosis of autism and love of cows led her to revolutionize the livestock industry. | [ALA](#), [NSTA](#) | Lexile: 960

**Stand There! She Shouted:** The Invincible Photographer Julia Margaret Cameron by *Susan Goldman Rubin*  
The story of British photographer Julia Margaret Cameron and her exotic bohemian life. | [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 980

**Untamed:** The Wild Life of Jane Goodall by *Anita Silvey*  
A biography of one of the most recognized scientists in the world. | [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 1100



**Voice of Freedom:** Fannie Lou Hamer: Spirit of the Civil Rights Movement by *Carole Boston Weatherford*  
A collage-illustrated collection of free form poems describing the life and work of civil rights advocate Fannie Lou Hamer. | [ALA](#), [NCSS](#) | Lexile: 820

\*Many listed books were selected as exemplary books by one or more of the following organizations: the *American Library Association* (ALA), the *International Literacy Association* (ILA), the *National Council for the Social Studies* (NCSS), the *National Council of Teachers of English* (NCTE), the *National Science Teachers Association* (NSTA), the *American Association for the Advancement of Science* (AAAS) or the *United States Board on Books for Young People* (USBBY). Others awards as noted.



# SUMMER READING

## Favorites & Classics

*For Grades 5-6*

### **The Secret Garden** by Frances Hodgson Burnett

A ten-year-old orphan comes to live in a lonely house on the Yorkshire moors where she discovers an invalid cousin and the mysteries of a locked garden. | Lexile: 970

### **The Incredible Journey** by Sheila Burnford

A Siamese cat, an old bull terrier, and a young Labrador retriever travel together 250 miles through the Canadian wilderness to find their family. | Lexile: 1320

### **Extra Credit** by Andrew Clements

As letters flow back and forth — between the prairies of Illinois and the mountains of Afghanistan, across cultural and religious divides — sixth-grader Abby, ten-year-old Amira, and eleven-year-old Sadeed begin to speak and listen to each other. | Lexile: 830

### **The Watsons Go To Birmingham - 1963** by Christopher Paul Curtis

The ordinary interactions and everyday routines of the Watsons, an African American family living in Flint, Michigan, are drastically changed after they go to visit Grandma in Alabama in the summer of 1963. | Lexile: 1000

**The Search for WondLa** by Tony DiTerlizzi  
Living in isolation with a robot on what appears to be an alien world populated with bizarre life forms, a twelve-year-old human girl called Eva Nine sets out on a journey to find others like her. Features "augmented reality" pages, in which readers with a webcam can access additional information about Eva Nine's world. | Lexile: 760

### **The City of Ember** by Jeanne DuPrau

In the year 241, twelve-year-old Lina trades jobs on Assignment Day to be a Messenger to run to new places in her decaying but beloved city, perhaps even to glimpse Unknown Regions. | Lexile: 680

### **The Birchbark House** by Louise Erdrich

Omakayas, a seven-year-old Native American girl of the Ojibwa tribe, lives through the joys of summer and the perils of winter on an island in Lake Superior in 1847. | Lexile: 970

### **The Ear, the Eye, and the Arm** by Nancy Farmer

In 2194 in Zimbabwe, General Matsika's three children are kidnapped and put to work in a plastic mine, while three mutant detectives use their special powers to search for them. | Lexile: 660

### **Harriet the Spy** by Louise Fitzhugh

Eleven-year-old Harriet, who is a spy and plans to be an author keeps a secret notebook filled with thoughts and notes on her schoolmates and people she observes on her afterschool spy route, but when some of her classmates read the notebook, they seek revenge. | Lexile: 760

### **Coraline** by Neil Gaiman

Looking for excitement, Coraline ventures through a mysterious door into a world that is similar, yet disturbingly different from her own, where she must challenge a gruesome entity in order to save herself, her parents, and the souls of three others. | Lexile: 740

### **No More Dead Dogs** by Gordon Korman

Eighth-grade football hero Wallace Wallace is sentenced to detention attending rehearsals of the school play where, in spite of himself, he becomes wrapped up in the production and begins to suggest changes that improve not only the play but his life as well. | Lexile: 610

### **The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe** by C. S. Lewis

Four English schoolchildren find their way through the back of a wardrobe into the magic land of Narnia and assist Aslan, the golden lion, to triumph over the White Witch, who has cursed the land with eternal winter. | Lexile: 940





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*For Grades 5-6*

### **Number the Stars** by *Lois Lowry*

In 1943, during the German occupation of Denmark, ten-year-old Annemarie learns how to be brave and courageous when she helps shelter her Jewish friend from the Nazis. | Lexile: 670

### **Anne of Green Gables** by *L. M. Montgomery*

Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely, middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her. | Lexile: 850

### **The Borrowers** by *Mary Norton*

Miniature people who live in an old country house by borrowing things from the humans are forced to emigrate from their home under the clock. | Lexile: 780

### **A Single Shard** by *Linda Sue Park*

Tree-ear, a thirteen-year-old orphan in medieval Korea, lives under a bridge in a potters' village, and longs to learn how to throw the delicate celadon ceramics himself. | Lexile: 920

### **Bridge to Terabithia** by *Katherine Paterson*

The life of a ten-year-old boy in rural Virginia expands when he becomes friends with a newcomer who subsequently meets an untimely death trying to reach their hideaway, Terabithia, during a storm. | Lexile: 810

### **Tom's Midnight Garden** by *Philippa Pearce*

While staying with his aunt and uncle, Tom discovers a beautiful garden that is visible only at night and meets a little girl from the Victorian era with whom he travels back in time. | Lexile: 860

### **Ninth Ward** by *Jewell Parker Rhodes*

In New Orleans' Ninth Ward, twelve-year-old Lanesha, who can see spirits, and her adopted grandmother have no choice but to stay and weather the storm as Hurricane Katrina bears down upon them. | Lexile: 470

### **Esperanza Rising** by *Pam Muñoz Ryan*

Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth and privilege in Mexico to go work in the labor camps of Southern California, where they must adapt to the harsh circumstances facing Mexican farm workers on the eve of the Great Depression. | Lexile: 750

### **One Crazy Summer** by *Rita Williams-Garcia*

In the summer of 1968, after travelling from Brooklyn to Oakland, California, to spend a month with the mother they barely know, eleven-year-old Delphine and her two younger sisters arrive to a cold welcome as they discover that their mother, a dedicated poet and printer, is resentful of the intrusion of their visit and wants them to attend a nearby Black Panther summer camp. | Lexile: 750

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## SERIES

***The Chronicles of Prydain*** by *Lloyd Alexander*

***Crispin*** trilogy by *Avi*

***Poppy*** series by *Avi*

***John Bellairs Mysteries*** by *John Bellairs*

***The Penderwicks*** series by *Jeanne Birdsall*

***The Dark is Rising*** series by *Susan Cooper*

***The Unicorn Chronicles*** by *Bruce Coville*

***The Moffats*** series by *Eleanor Estes*

***Joey Pigza*** series by *Jack Gantos*

***Shadow Children*** by *Margaret Peterson Haddix*

***Redwall*** series by *Brian Jacques*

***Diary of a Wimpy Kid*** series by *Jeff Kinney*

***Regarding the....*** series by *Kate Klise*

***Dog Friday*** trilogy by *Hilary McKay*

***Percy Jackson & the Olympians*** by *Rick Riordan*

***Harry Potter*** series by *J. K. Rowling*

***Septimus Heap*** series by *Angie Sage*

***Enola Holmes Mysteries*** by *Nancy Springer*

***The Mysterious Benedict Society*** by *Trenton Lee Stewart*

***Sammy Keyes*** series by *Wendelin Van Draanen*

***Adam Canfield*** series by *Michael Winrip*

***Enchanted Forest Chronicles*** by *Patricia Wrede*

***Dear America*** series by *various authors*

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